

TURNING
—
"BEANTOWN"
INTO
"ZINETOWN"
at your
local library!"

a guide to Boston area library resources for zinemakers

by Runny

A huge thank you to the all of the librarians who helped me make this project happen by answering a million questions.

This zine was created before March 14, when Trump signed an executive order cutting funding to the Institute of Museum and Library Services. This will likely affect many programs and services covered in this zine.

I have chosen to print it anyway, if for no other reason than for you to remember what was and what could be again.

Libraries are worth saving. Call your senators and take political action if you are able to. Let the government know how valuable libraries are to us.

You could say I'm something of a "library enthusiast"...



My collection of library cards ~~except Boston proper~~
~~because for SOME reason they don't have keychains~~

I make it a point to visit every library I can. As a zinemaker, I appreciate the resources they provide. As a member of society, I value the important work libraries do, and given the uncertainty of their future, I want to encourage everyone to show up for them. Libraries that get used are libraries that get funded.

This is starter guide to the Greater Boston area libraries, and how you can use them to make zines. I researched 16 libraries in the metroplex, not including 4 I left out to save space, because they didn't have much for zinemakers, though they were beautiful (Chelsea, Everett, Lynn, Beverly).

Different libraries have different offerings and vibes. If you're able to travel a bit, there's so many cool things to see and use!

HOURS



The library branch closest to me closes by 6pm almost every day.

Don't be like me! Know when and where to go!

The towns surrounding Boston have a main and maybe 1 or 2 other branches; I've only logged **main branch** hours here, so please make sure to **double check**!

OPEN TIL 9PM MON-THURS:

Malden
Medford
Somerville
Cambridge
Arlington
Watertown*

Waltham
Newton
Needham
Brookline
Milton
Quincy
Salem

OPEN TIL 8PM MON-THURS:

Swampscott (8:30pm)
Boston**
Dedham

CLOSED SUNDAY:
Boston (except Central)**
Dedham
Swampscott

* Watertown is the only one open til 9pm on **Friday** too!

** Boston's Central branch is open Sun & til 8pm Mon-Thurs; however, Boston also has **25 other branches** with a pattern that I wanted to include:

Boston side branches:

Mon-Thurs: Open til 6pm, except 1x/wk, open til 8pm
Open **Fri/Sat** til 5pm, closed **Sundays**

PRINTING

Many libraries will let you bring your own paper to print on if you ask nicely. Colorful Astrobright covers are a time honored tradition!

| |  |  | B/W | COLOR | OTHER |
|------------|---|---|-----|-------|---------------------------|
| Boston | .20 | .60 | | | \$20/mo FREE printing |
| Malden | .15 | N/A | | | Cash only |
| Medford | .25 | .25 | | | Cash only |
| Somerville | .15 | .30 | | | \$3/day free, cash only |
| Cambridge | .15 | N/A | | | 25pgs/day free, cash only |
| Arlington | .15 | .30 | | | - |
| Watertown | .10 | .40 | | | 2 bw pages/day free |
| Waltham | .10 | .25 | | | \$1/day free |
| Newton | .15 | .25 | | | \$1.25/day free |
| Brookline | .15 | .40 | | | - |
| Needham | .15 | .15 | | | 25pgs free |
| Dedham | .10 | .10 | | | 10pg/day free |
| Milton | .15 | .25 | | | - |
| Quincy | .15 | .40 | | | - |
| Swampscott | .25 | .50 | | | - |
| Salem | .10 | N/A | | | - |

libraries are
sorted vaguely
by location &
vibes

COMPUTERS & SOFTWARE

If you need a computer to work on zines, all libraries will have computers to use, but these have special access to programs:

- Most makerspaces with computers have Adobe Photoshop/Indesign/Illustrator or similar installed.
- BPL Central library has Adobe products installed at the Kirstein Business Library & Innovation Center (KBLIC).
- Needham has GIMP installed on their computers.



CHROMEBOOKS

As part of their Library of Things (more on that later), some libraries will let you check out Chromebooks. You probably can't download anything to them, and you may have to be a resident of that city. Many libraries will have accoutrements to go with them too!

BROWSER SOFTWARE

Even if you can't download anything, there are lots of in-browser tools you can use to work. Just make sure you can save elsewhere:

- **Canva:** Create designs for printing or web. Good text tool, has graphics and effects to play with.
Nonprofit employees can use Pro for free!
- **Google Slides/Figma:** Similar to Canva.
- **Photopea:** In-browser Photoshop knockoff, helpful for fixing scans or adding effects.
- **Sejda:** Split, merge, reorganize your pdfs! Lots of pdf tools for getting print ready. See the **workflow** page for some ideas of how to use it! (Tip: Bypass the 3 tasks/hr max by logging out and back into the computer.)
- **Zine Arranger by Nash High:** I LOVE THIS THING. If your zine is in reading half-page order, you can upload a pdf and get a formatted, printable pdf! This is a lifesaver for comics.
- **Bookbinder.js:** Similar to Zine Arranger but a little more advanced.
- **PDF to PNG:** Most libraries send your scans as pdfs; you can use this to make them separate images, and it's the least compression-y tool I've found.
- **Waifu2x:** A great way to upscale art. Super helpful for comics or art printing if you accidentally worked too low res.
- **Itch.io:** Good place to upload readable copies of your zine for sharing digitally.

I love you
makerspaces

MAKERSPACES

Have you ever wanted to use a laser cutter or a saddle stitch stapler but didn't want to buy it?

Makerspaces are places where you get to tinker, make, and express your creativity with things the library owns! Certain tools may require special training, there may be limitations around hours, and there may be a supplies charge. With that said, all the libraries with Makerspaces, and a few of my favorite zine-related tools:



Cricut/Vinyl Cutter

Cut vinyl, paper, cardstock, stickers, textiles, almost anything thin! Great for weird size/shaped zines or intricate cuts.



Laser Cutter

Cuts thicker things the cricut can't handle, can also engrave wood, metal, etc. Req's training.



Button Maker

Make new buttons for you & your friends' ita bags! May need to buy metal backs.



WATERTOWN

◆ SADDLE STITCH STAPLER ◆

This bad boy RULES for booklet stapling!

- * Bookbinding, art/collage tools, & more
- (also great hours & friendly staff!!)

good god
so much more

MEDFORD

- * Die cut machine
- * SO MUCH arts & crafts supplies



CAMBRIDGE

- * Pretty good hours



WALTHAM

◆ INDUSTRIAL PAPER CUTTER ◆

Cuts up to 500 sheets! Trim your zines easily!

- * 24" printer for BIG print jobs!



QUINCY

- * arts & crafts supplies



BROOKLINE

- * graphics tablet, but no programs in library



SWAMPSCOTT

- * iPad with ProCreate
- * large format printer
- * call to ask about training

Please call to ask about makerspace hours!
Most have specific appointment or drop in times.

LIBRARY OF THINGS



Sometimes you may want to get things done at home. You can find still some cool things to check out, especially if you enjoy experimenting with "weird" zines. Note: you may need to be a resident. Please be considerate.



Scanner



Cricut/Vinyl Cutter



Laminator



Camera

BOSTON



- * not much, but great comics selection
- * also, zine library! ↗



MALDEN

- * graphics tablet



WATERTOWN

- * lightpad
- * paper shredder
- * zine library ↗
- & much more!

NEWTON

- * Brailleur ↗
- * paper shredder

DEDHAM



QUINCY



- * thermal imaging camera

Chromebooks/laptops/tablets



Video/Board/Outdoor games



Accessibility tools

Very bright lights



Puzzles

Etch-a-Sketches



AV equipment

Buddha boards

and
MORE!
research pays off!

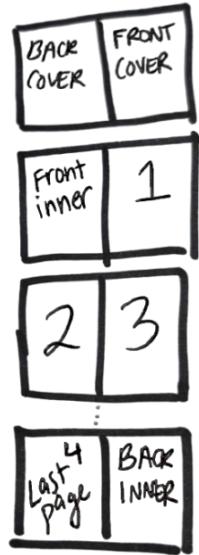
Other things you may find not listed here:

BONUS: LIBRARY FRIENDLY MULTI-PAGE ZINE WORKFLOW

Creating a booklet digitally without InDesign or other downloadable programs can be challenging. Here's a simple method for imposition, all using in-browser tools.

1. Make your zines on 11" x 8.5" spreads in Canva/Sheets/whatever like on the right & download as a PDF.

Make sure you have an even amount of spreads or a multiple of 4 half-size pages, including blanks!



2. Use **Sejda** "Split in half/Split PDF" pages down the middle" tool to divide the spreads into 2 pages.

Uncheck all options.

If you have 5.5" x 8.5" comic/image pages already, you can skip this step and use **Merge** to add any blank inner covers and arrange them into a pdf.



3. Use **Sejda** "Merge" to move the back cover to the end, and get your PDF in **page reading order**. Make sure the number of pages is a multiple of 4. You can add blank pages right before the back cover if you really need to. Download and **save** to drive as a reading copy. Remember: Library computers don't save data! Bring a flash drive or use the cloud to store your files.

4. Use **Zine Arranger** by Nash High to organize your pages into a Half Size printable document. Standard zines print on short edge.



Give it a test print, and make sure to save that file to your drive for future runs!

Thank you so much for reading! I hope this helps and inspires you to make more zines and support your libraries!

Disclaimer: This is NOT a comprehensive guide. Please use it as a starting point, and research and discover more on your own!

And feel free to send me any corrections, comments, etc to runnycrusty@gmail.com.

Do you make or love zines? Learn how libraries can help you!

This is a noncomprehensive guide to the lesser-known offerings of the greater Boston area libraries. Libraries are a service worth protecting, and I want you to love them as much as I do!

If you do have any corrections, comments, love mail, hate mail, etc please email me at runnycrusty@gmail.com. I would love to hear from you, even if it's just to tell me you checked out one near you!

If you're interested in distributing these, please let me know.
I'm happy to email you a printable version. :)

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